



SOCIAL SECURITY

The Deputy Commissioner of the Office of Hearings Operations

March 5, 2024

David Camp, CEO
NOSSCR
1300 I (Eye) Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear David Camp:

The Office of Hearings Operations remains focused on customer service, accountability, transparency, efficiency, quality, and preserving the public's trust in our programs. In the past, we have collaborated with you on many different topics to improve our rules, efficiency, and service delivery. Working together is helpful to the people we serve. We always welcome your ideas and appreciate hearing your feedback and concerns. Please know that I have a particular interest in improving the timeliness and quality of our hearing process. Maintaining a strong and supportive relationship between our agency and your organization is vital to our success.

Enclosed you will find a map showing our current processing times, by office. As you will note, there are a number of offices with longer waits for a hearing decision. Our long-standing goal is to reduce processing time until we have achieved a national average processing time of 270 days or less. Additionally, we are making a special effort to eliminate wait time disparities, so that the public is receiving the same level of timely service throughout the country. To meet these public service obligations, we are seeking your and your organization's help.

There are several firms in California and New Jersey who typically restrict most of their availability to in-person hearings only. This means that local hearing offices servicing those firms are limited in the number of hearings that can be offered to claimants residing in those service areas, resulting in longer wait times than necessary. We have a network of judges in other offices available to assist the affected claimants via telephone and online-video. Accordingly, we can provide an earlier hearing for individuals that are willing to accept telephone and/or online-video options. Telephone and online-video hearings (OVH) continue to be easy and secure options and result in improved public service and overall efficiency. While in-person hearings are still an available option, telephone and OVH modalities often provide greater flexibility and timeliness.

It is my hope that you and your organization will urge your membership to readily accept telephone or OVH whenever possible, to assist us in balancing wait times across the nation and improve public service. Remote hearings allow us to leverage judicial capacity and balance

hearing requests around the country. SSA and NOSSCR have maintained a positive and productive working partnership and we truly appreciate your commitment to serving the American public.

Sincerely,

Joe Lytle
Deputy Commissioner
Office of Hearings Operations

Hearing Office Average Processing Time (APT) for Month of February 2024 through 2/16

